SPAWN®

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THE VOICE-HEARERS
PART THREE: LAUGHTER IN THE DARK

ISSUE 168 DIGITAL EDITION

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PREVIOUSLY IN SPAWN:
Al Simmons was a hit man for the US government until a treacherous assassin ended his life. At the moment of death, Al was offered a deal by the demon Malebolgia and returned to Earth as Spawn, a creature with supernatural powers born in Hell.

As Armageddon consumed the world, Spawn turned against his masters, destroying all life on Earth. While God and Satan continue their endless conflict in a parallel universe, Spawn has re-created the world and resurrected the human race, in what has become known as the White Light. The portals to Heaven and Hell are closed, leaving humanity free from the influence of angels and demons.

Spawn has been forced to face his own brutal past and the memory that Al Simmons beat his wife, causing her to miscarry their unborn child. Knowing he can never go back to his beloved Wanda, he has returned instead to the squalid alleyways that have become his purgatory.

Now the cracks in Spawn's brave new world are showing. Spawn's old nemesis, the Clown, has returned. Feeding on the latent evil in the tenants of New Vista apratments, he has re-opened a doorway between hell and earth.

As they investigate the violent events, Sam and Twitch believe they have discovered the sourc of the the whispering voice that has driven the tenants mad.

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NEW VISTA APARTMENTS: SCENE OF MULTIPLE CRIMES OF VIOLENCE.
DOES THE CHIEF KNOW YOU'VE BROUGHT WILMA BARBERA HERE?
SHE IS THE PRIME SUSPECT IN A BRUTAL MURDER.
WE'LL TAKE THE RAP, ALVAREZ.
YOU JUST SIT WITH THE LADY. WE'LL CALL YOU IF WE NEED HER INSIDE.
LET'S GET IN THERE AND GET THIS THING DONE.
AND KEEP YOUR PIECE HANDY. GOD KNOWS HOW MANY MORE WACKOS ARE ROAMING AROUND IN HERE.
SHARE MY DISEASE! WET KISSES
SO AM I CRAZY OR COULD WILMA'S BOYFRIEND STILL BE ALIVE?
IN THEORY? YES.
ACCORDING TO HER, HE'S BEEN TRAPPED IN THE GARBAGE CHUTE FOR OVER A MONTH, BUT IT'S JUST POSSIBLE HE'S STAYED ALIVE BY LIVING OFF THE WASTE.
WHITE LIGHT FEVER!
YEAH. PEOPLE THROW OUT A LOT OF GOOD FOOD.
IT DOESN'T EXPLAIN WHY EVERYONE IN THE BUILDING HAS GONE LOCO.
I REALLY, REALLY WAS HOPING THAT ALL THE WEIRD SHIT WAS OVER, Y'KNOW.
SO WE COULD GO BACK TO DEALING WITH THE JUNKIES, GANGSTERS, HOOKERS...THE OCCASIONAL SPREE KILLER.
HAPPY DAYS.

HE'S IN THERE.
WHAT?
HE'S IN THERE.
15
WHO'S IN THERE SWEET-HEART?
THE SCRATCHY MAN. HE SAID TO TELL YOU.
I HAVE TO GO NOW.
I'M HAVING A TEA PARTY WITH MY DOLLIES.
SCRATCHY MAN?
C'MON SAM, WE'D BETTER CHECK IT OUT.
I REMEMBER THIS APARTMENT. I CALLED HERE. THERE'S JUST AN OLD LADY, HAS A THING ABOUT COCKROACHES.
WE GONNA ANNOUNCE?
15
I GUESS.
ARMED POLICE OFFICERS COMING IN!

CHRIST ON A CRUTCH!
I GUESS SHE DOES HAVE A ROACH PROBLEM.
MA'AM?
HOLY SHIT!
SPLUTCH
I-I THINK THE ROACHES ATE HER HEAD!
SAM! OVER HERE.
IT SOUNDS LIKE THE LADY HAS COMPANY.
ROLL OUT THE BARREL, WE'LL HAVE A BARREL OF FUN...

ROLL OUT THE BARREL, WE'VE GOT THE BLUES ON THE RUN-
OKAY, BUDDY, DON'T *MOVE*.
LET'S KEEP THOSE HANDS WHERE WE CAN SEE THEM.
BE RIGHT WITH YOU DETECTIVES. JUST GOTTA FINISH THIS LITTLE *REPAIR* JOB.
YOU KNOW WHAT THEY SAY- A STITCH IN TIME SAVES NINE.
TELL ME HE'S NOT DOING WHAT I *THINK* HE'S DOING.

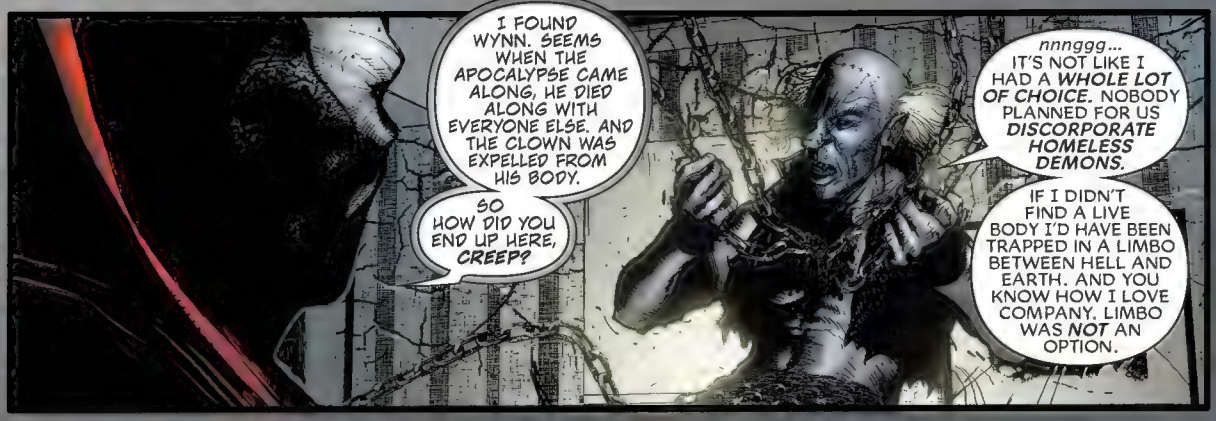
OKAY SMARTASS, YOU WANNA COP AN INSANITY PLEA, YOU GOT *ME* CONVINCED. NOW PUT DOWN THE NEEDLE AND PLACE YOUR HANDS ON YOUR HEAD.
IS THAT BARBERA'S BOY-FRIEND?
HOW ABOUT IT? ARE YOU BARNEY SAUNDERS?
WELL NOW, I HATE TO GET ALL *EXISTENTIAL* ON YOU, BUT THE ANSWER TO THAT HAS TO BE YES...
...AND NO.
IT'S KIND'A COMPLICATED.
UH, LISTEN BEFORE YOU HEROES START READING ME MY RIGHTS, WHAT EXACTLY ARE YOU PLANNING TO CHARGE ME WITH?
DAMAGE TO PROPERTY?
WHAT?!
WHAT THE HELL ARE *YOU STARING AT?*
OH YEAH. THERE'S *THAT* TOO.
BUT HEY... THE SCRAGGY OLD BITCH WAS ASKING FOR IT. SPRAYING THE GODDAM ROACH KILL DOWN ON ME EVERY FIVE MINUTES.
WHAT CAN YOU DO?

HOW ABOUT YOU LAY FACE DOWN ON THE FLOOR SO MY PARTNER CAN PUT SOME NICE SHINY CUFFS ON YOU?
HOW ABOUT YOU STICK THAT GUN UP YOUR ASS AND GIVE YOURSELF A HOT LEAD ENEMA?
WRONG ANSWER, ASSWIPE!
BLAM!
BLAM!
BLAM!
OUCH?

THAT DOES IT! I'M MAKING A FORMAL COMPLAINT.
THAT WAS POLICE BRUTALITY!
AH!
YEE-HAH!
CALL IN A TEN-THIRTEEN!
OFFICER DOWN! OFFICER DOWN!
AWK!

HEAR THIS CLOWN.
THERE IS A NEW WORLD ORDER.
YOU DON'T BELONG HERE!
DEMONS ARE NOT WELCOME IN MY WORLD!
WELL... UNNGG... EX-CUSE ME!
I GUESS I DIDN'T GET THE MEMO...
...BECAUSE I WAS STUCK IN A FRIKKING GARBAGE CHUTE BEING EATEN ALIVE BY RATS!

IS THIS WHAT YOU WEREN'T TELLING ME, TWITCH? DID YOU GO FIND SPAWN?
AH, YES. I GUESS I DID.
GOOD CALL.
YOU MIND FILLING US IN? DO YOU KNOW THIS CRAZY PERSON?
AND WHILE YOU'RE AT IT, MAYBE YOU CAN EXPLAIN HOW COME THE SONOFABITCH IS STILL BREATHING WITH THOSE CHAINS PUNCHED THROUGH HIS HEART.
THIS GARBAGE-EATING PIECE OF CRAP IS THE DEMON FORMERLY KNOW AS VIOLATOR.
HE WORKED FOR ONE OF THE LORDS OF HELL UNTIL HE SCREWED UP AND WAS BANISHED TO EARTH IN THE FORM OF THE UNIQUELY REPULSIVE CLOWN.
I TOOK GREAT PLEASURE IN OBLITERATING HIS FAT UGLY ASS BUT IT TURNED OUT HE WAS TOUGHER TO KILL THAN I THOUGHT.
HE ENDED UP COHABITING THE BODY OF A HIGHLY-PLACED CIA OFFICER NAMED JASON WYNN.
NOW THERE WAS A MARRIAGE MADE IN HELL.


I FOUND WYNN. SEEMS WHEN THE APOCALYPSE CAME ALONG, HE DIED ALONG WITH EVERYONE ELSE. AND THE CLOWN WAS EXPELLED FROM HIS BODY.
SO HOW DID YOU END UP HERE, CREEP?
nnnggg... IT'S NOT LIKE I HAD A WHOLE LOT OF CHOICE. NOBODY PLANNED FOR US DISCORPORATE HOMELESS DEMONS.
IF I DIDN'T FIND A LIVE BODY I'D HAVE BEEN TRAPPED IN A LIMBO BETWEEN HELL AND EARTH. AND YOU KNOW HOW I LOVE COMPANY. LIMBO WAS NOT AN OPTION.

ENTER THE UNFORTUNATE BARNEY, TRAPPED IN A GARBAGE CHUTE, WITH THE RATS AND ROACHES FEEDING ON HIM. HE WAS THE ONE IN A BILLION WHO DIDN'T DIE. THE APOCALYPSE PASSED HIM BY.
HE DIDN'T KNOW IT, BUT HE WAS BETTER OFF THAN THE REST OF THE HUMAN RACE...

UNTIL YOU FOUND HIM.
HEY, GIMME CREDIT. I KEPT HIS SORRY ASS ALIVE.

THIS CIA GUY, JASON WYNN. HE'S THE ONE ISN'T HE?
HE'S THE MAN IN THE SHADOWS WHO'S BEEN SCREWING WITH ME AND SAM ALL THESE YEARS.
YEAH? WELL, I HOPE YOU TORE HIM A NEW ASSHOLE TO CRAP ON US WITH.

WYNN WON'T BE CRAPPING ON ANYONE...
HE WAS ALL SET TO CARRY ON WHERE HE LEFT OFF. HE THOUGHT HE WAS UNTOUCHABLE. FOR YEARS HE STASHED AWAY RECORDS OF ALL HIS DIRTY OPERATIONS, THE ASSASSINATIONS AND COUPS, THE TERRORIST ATTACKS. PROOF THAT EVERY WESTERN GOVERNMENT HAD THEIR HANDS IN THE SHIT.
THAT WAS HIS INSURANCE.
BUT I'M MAKING THE RULES NOW. I TOLD WYNN WHAT I'VE DONE TO HIS EVIDENCE.
EVERY HARD DRIVE, EVERY DISK, EVERY DOCUMENT IN EVERY SAFE DEPOSIT BOX AND POSTAL DROP.
THEY'RE ALL GONE.
THERE'S NOTHING LEFT BUT ASHES AND MELTED PLASTIC.
HE HAS NO PROTECTION NOW. HE'S A MAN WITH TEN THOUSAND ENEMIES AND EVERY ONE OF THEM WANTS A PIECE OF HIM.
HE KNOWS HE'S A DEAD MAN WALKING.

WHAT ABOUT THIS SCUMBAG? WHAT'S HIS AGENDA?
THIS IS ALL YOU ISN'T IT? EVERYTHING THAT'S HAPPENING IN THIS BUILDING. YOU'RE MAKING THEM DO IT.
OH YEAH, RIGHT. THAT IS JUST SO TYPICAL OF THE BLAME CULTURE THAT'S POISONING THIS COUNTRY. NO ONE TAKES RESPONSIBILITY ANY MORE.
"I'M A FAT BASTARD BECAUSE THEY MAKE FOOD TASTE TOO GOOD."
"I CHOPPED UP MY ENTIRE FAMILY BECAUSE THE DEMON TOLD ME TO."
PATHETIC!
"DO WHAT THOU WILT." THAT'S ALL I SAID.
I HAVE SEEN THE LIGHT. SWEET LORD, TAKE ME. SHOW ME THE GLORY...
THESE PEOPLE ARE SO REPRESSED. I JUST HELPED THEM TO OPEN UP A LITTLE...TO EXPRESS THEMSELVES...
SOMEONE... PLEASE... HELP ME...
...TO EXPLORE THE LIMITS OF THEIR CREATIVITY...

HELL IS HUNGRY FOR SOULS AND YOU KNOW WHAT? HUMAN SOULS ARE JUST ACHING TO GO STRAIGHT TO HELL.
YOU'VE BEEN A *NAUGHTY* DOLLY, AND YOU SHAN'T HAVE ANY PUDDING.
KRAAAK
K-R-R-AA A AK-K
CAN YOU FEEL IT? CAN YOU FEEL THE EVIL?
YOU CAN'T SHUT THIS WORLD OFF FROM HELL.
THEY NEED HELL...
...THEY WANT HELL...
...AND THEY'RE GONNA GET HELL!!

NYY-Y-Y-Y-U-U-U-U-R-R-RRRRRGH
YOU'RE ON MY TURF NOW!
YEAH? WELL, YOU KNOW WHAT?
BITE ME!
WOOOH! THE MAGIC WORDS...
A-A-A-A-A-A-A-AGHH!!!
P-TTOOO

POWER OF A GOD, MY ASS!
YOU AIN'T GOT IT ANY MORE HAVE YOU? SHE GAVE YOU THE POWER AND SHE TOOK IT AWAY.
I'VE STILL GOT WHAT IT TAKES TO WIPE THE FLOOR WITH A SECOND-RATE LOSER LIKE YOU, CLOWN.
THE NAME'S VIOLATOR!
CLOWN'S GONE, BABY! THE BIG BAD IS BACK AND I'VE GOT A SHITLOAD OF VIOLATING TO CATCH UP ON!
HELL
KLANG!!
KLANG!
YOU HEAR THAT? THE DOOR TO HELL IS OPEN. MY BROTHERS ARE COMING!
SAM, GET WILMA UP HERE...
-FAST!

R-R-A-A-WWW!!!
OO-OOOO...
TICKLES!
YOU KNOW, IT'S BEEN A WHILE SINCE I RIPPED YOUR FACE OFF, SPAWNY!!
COME ON SAM!
WHAT'S HAPPENING?
YOU BETTER TAKE A DEEP BREATH, LADY.
YOUR PRECIOUS BARNEY HAS BEEN THROUGH SOME CHANGES...

I WON'T LIE TO YOU... THIS IS GONNA SMART!
THAT'S HIM! THAT'S YOUR BOY-FRIEND!
BARNEY?
HUH?
AW CRAP, I DON'T BELIEVE THIS! I'M IN CHARGE HERE, NOT THAT SCUM-SWILLING WUH- WUH--
--WUH - WILMA?
JEEZ, WILMA, WHY DIDN'T YOU HELP ME?
DIDN'T YOU HEAR ME CALLING TO YOU?
I'M SO SORRY. I WAS SCARED, HONEY. I WAS SCARED OF FRED, BUT HE'S GONE NOW.
WE CAN BE TOGETHER.
I'M MESSED UP WILMA. LOOK AT ME. SOMETHING REAL BAD HAPPENED TO ME DOWN THERE.
I'VE GOT THIS THING INSIDE ME...
...AND IT WANTS TO COME OUT.

LISTEN. WHAT HE SAID ABOUT THE EVIL HERE. SURE, IT OPENED UP THE GATEWAY TO HELL, BUT IT CAN ONLY STAY OPEN WHILE HE'S ON THIS SIDE.
HOW DO YOU KNOW THAT?
HE'S SHARING MY BRAIN CELLS. HE HAS MY MEMORIES, I HAVE HIS.
AND THAT, LET ME TELL YOU, IS ABOUT AS MUCH FUN AS TAKING A DIP IN AN OPEN SEWER.
I CAN'T KEEP HIM SHUT DOWN MUCH LONGER. HE'S TOO STRONG FOR ME.
YOU HAVE TO SEND ME BACK DOWN THERE. STRAIGHT BACK DOWN TO HELL!
KLANNGG!!
KLANNGG!!
ARE YOU SURE ABOUT THIS?
SURE? NO, I'M NOT SURE. BUT NEITHER OF US HAVE ANY CHOICE, DO WE?
THEY'RE ALMOST HERE!
BARNEY!
BARNEY! DON'T LEAVE ME!
I DON'T WANT TO LOSE YOU AGAIN.

OH, I WASN'T PLANNING TO LEAVE YOU, BABY.
IT WOULD'VE GOTTEN LONELY DOWN THERE WITHOUT YOU.
D-DOWN THERE?
BARNEY!
NO!
YOU SHOULDN'T HAVE LEFT ME DOWN THERE WILMA. YOU SHOULD HAVE HELPED ME.
OH MY CHRIST!
STOP HIM!
DON'T INTERFERE WITH THIS.
YOU STOP HIM NOW AND WE'LL BE FACING A LOT WORSE THAN THE VIOLATOR.
HE'S RIGHT, TWITCH. LET IT GO.
NO

CLEAR THE BUILDING!
GET EVERYONE WHO'S STILL ALIVE OUT OF HERE!
WHUMMMPH!
I'M SEALING THIS HELL-HOLE FOR GOOD!
WHUMP!
WHUMP!
WHUMP!
"THIS IS GOING TO HAPPEN AGAIN ISN'T IT?"

CLOWN WAS RIGHT ABOUT ONE THING, TWITCH. THERE IS EVIL INSIDE ALL OF US.
THE PEOPLE WHO LIVED HERE LEARNED THE HARD WAY, WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU LET THE DEMONS OUT.
THEY HAVE TO LIVE WITH WHAT THEY'VE DONE...
...TO THEIR FAMILIES...
...TO THEM-SELVES...
BUT IF THIS HAPPENS AGAIN... *WHEN* IT HAPPENS... I'LL BE THERE.
YEAH. WELL, YOU NEED ANY HELP, YOU KNOW WHERE TO FIND US.
IF INTERNAL AFFAIRS DOESN'T TAKE OUR BADGES OVER WILMA BARBERA.
HOW ABOUT THAT? BACK TOGETHER AGAIN...
...THE THREE FRIGGING STOOGES!

HE'S DONE IT! SPAWN HAS CLOSED THE DOORWAY TO HELL...
...JUST AS YOU WISHED, MAMMON.
WELL DONE SPAWN.
WELL DONE, MY GOOD AND FAITHFUL SERVANT.
NEXT ISSUE: Voodoo Child...

Tyrant Lizard Kings
EMPIRE